



PUBLIC NOTICE

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UNDERSTANDING REACHED BETWEEN FCC AND INDUSTRY CANADA TO ALLOW USE OF DIGITAL MULTIPOINT DISTRIBUTION SERVICE (MDS) SYSTEMS ALONG THE U.S./CANADA BORDER AREA

On December 5, 1997, the FCC and Industry Canada finalized an Understanding that permits the use of digital technology by Multipoint Distribution Service (MDS) systems along the U.S./Canada border area. The *General FCC/Industry Canada Understanding Concerning the Coordination of the 2500-2686 MHz Band Within 80 km (50 miles) of the United States of America/Canada Border* (the "Understanding") maintains the previous requirements for analog systems, but extends the scope of the earlier agreement by establishing allocation parameters for digital systems within the border area. The revision was required to facilitate implementation of digital systems for the Multipoint Distribution Service (MDS) and other services operating in the band along the U.S.-Canada border. The Understanding supersedes a prior understanding bearing the same title which was dated March 23, 1989 and which had limited use of the band to analog systems.

MDS services utilizing digital techniques have the potential to deliver increased quality and diversity of service, as well as provide for more efficient use of the spectrum. The Understanding sets forth the technical parameters and threshold criteria for avoiding coordination between digital stations and the current analog stations, as well as between digital stations. Additionally, in light of the limited record for the application of digital technology in this band, provision is made for the revision of the protection ratios for digital systems when more extensive performance data becomes available. Those operators in the U.S.-Canada border area who have been precluded from using digital systems may now submit applications to do.

The full text of the Understanding has been placed on file at the International Bureau Reference Room located on the first floor of 2000 M St. N.W and is also accessible through the FCC/IB Website. Copies can also be obtained through the Commission contractor, International Transcription Service, at (202) 857-3800. For further information, contact Henry Straube, Planning and Negotiations Division, International Bureau at (202) 418-2150 or Keith Larson, Mass Media Bureau at (202) 418-2600.

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